

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 20 July 1551 and proved 25 November 1560, of Francis Hall of Grantham, Lincolnshire, Comptroller of Calais. The testator was the son of Francis Hall (d.1534), a descendant of King Edward I, and Elizabeth Wingfield, the daughter of Sir John Wingfield (1428–1481) of Letheringham, Suffolk, and Elizabeth FitzLewis (d.1500).

Francis Hall (d.1534), alderman and burgess of Grantham, Lincolnshire, and Comptroller of Calais, was the son and heir of Thomas Hall, esquire, of Grantham by Alice, daughter of John Bramswell. He was born before 1476 and adopted his father's career as a merchant of the staple of Calais. By 1518 he had entered the service of his wife's cousin, Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk. Francis Hall and Elizabeth Wingfield had six sons, Francis, Robert, John, Edmund (or Edward), esquire, Thomas and Thomas (again), and one daughter, Alice, who married Sir Henry Sutton. Francis Hall died intestate on 14 August 1534. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2004), pp. 143, 371, 373-4, and 659, available online. For the will of Elizabeth FitzLewis (d.1500), see Norfolk Record Office 135-8 Cage.

The testator was one of the principal legatees in the will of his mother's brother, Sir Robert Wingfield (b. in or before 1464, d. 1539), the seventh son of Sir John Wingfield (1428–1481) of Letheringham, Suffolk, and Elizabeth FitzLewis (d.1500). In his will below, the testator requests that 'my body be buried in Saint Nicholas churchyard besides my uncle, Sir Robert Wingfield'. For the will of Sir Robert Wingfield, see TNA PROB 11/27, ff. 262-3.

By his wife, Ursula (d.1569), the sister of Sir William Sharnington (c.1495-1553) and Sir Henry Sharnington (c.1518-1581) and daughter of Thomas Sharnington (d.1527?) and his wife Katherine, the daughter and heir of William Pyrton of Little Bentley, Essex, the testator had three sons, Arthur (1539-1605), Henry and Robert, and three daughters, Elizabeth (wife of Sir Ralph Bouchier), Jane (wife firstly, of Francis Neale, esquire, of Keythorpe, Leicestershire, and secondly, of Henry Skipwith (d. 15 August 1588), esquire, of Keythorpe and Tugby, Leicestershire), and Mary (wife of Maurice Berkeley (d.1600) of Wymondham, Leicestershire; for whose will, dated 20 April 1600 and proved 2 June 1600, see TNA PROB 11/96, ff. 74-5). See Richardson, *supra*, and the pedigree of Fitzwilliams alias Hall in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of the County of Lincoln in 1562-4* (London: George Bell, 1881), pp. 46-7, available online.

After the testator's death on 10 June 1552, his widow, Ursula, married John Bannaster (d.1556) of Calais and Beningbrough in Newton-upon-Oise, Yorkshire. The wardship of Arthur Hall (1539–1605), was granted to Oxford's future father-in-law, William Cecil. Hall later recalled that he was educated with William Cecil's eldest son, Thomas, 'in my Lord your father's house'. Shortly after the testator's death, William Cecil and Arthur Hall (1539-1605) became related by marriage. In 1555, William Cecil's sister, Elizabeth Cecil (d.1611) married Robert Wingfield (b. about 1532, d. 31 March 1580) of Upton, Northamptonshire, and Shottisham, Suffolk, the son of Robert Wingfield (d. 4 February 1575/6) and Margery Quarles, and grandson of Sir Henry Wingfield (b. about 1435, d.

1494?) and Elizabeth Rookes). Sir Henry Wingfield (b. about 1435, d. 1494?) was the brother of Sir John Wingfield (1428–1481) of Letheringham, and thus the uncle of the testator's mother and of Sir Robert Wingfield (b. in or before 1464, d. 1539) beside whom the testator requests that he be buried in the will below. See Richardson, *supra*, pp. 769–70.

Arthur Hall (1539–1605) translated into English ten books of Homer's *Iliad* from the French version of Hugues Salel, a copy of which he acquired in 1556. The work was published in 1581 with a dedication to his friend, Sir Thomas Cecil. For other details of Arthur Hall's life, see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online, and Barnett, Richard C., *Place, Profit and Power; A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, Elizabethan Statesman*, James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science, Vol. 51, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), pp. 76–8 (the latter source, however, incorrectly identifies Elizabeth Cecil's husband).

RM: Testamentum ffrancis Hall Armigeri

In the name of God, so be it. I, Francis Hall, esquire, Comptroller of the King's Majesty's town and marches of Calais, being of good mind and perfect memory, do make and ordain this my last will and testament wherein first and above all things I do commit my soul to the mercy of Almighty God, whom when it shall please to take me to the same out of this miserable and transitory world;

I ordain, give and bequeath unto Ursula, my wife, as of mere gift and gratitude over and above such dowers of my lands in the county of Guisnes, in Calais, Marque or elsewhere on this side the seas, and also in England as to her by order of law do appertain, the lordship of Knoke in Wiltshire to remain unto her for term of her life;

Item, whereas I am not waxed rich by the service of the King's Majesty last deceased and of our present Master, as all men may well know, as well for divers other considerations as for the baseness of the money, I do most humbly beseech the Lords of the King's Majesty's most honourable Privy Council in consideration of my service to be a means unto the King's Majesty that it will please him of his most bountiful grace and goodness to be good and gracious Lord to my poor wife, my son and three daughters, and at the least that it may please his Highness to give the wardship, marriage and relief of my said son to my wife with the third part of all such my lands as otherwise should come to the King's Majesty during the wardship and nonage of my said son;

Item, I will that my said wife shall have, for the sustenance of herself and her children till Michaelmas next that the rent shall be due, of such money, debts and goods that I have, the sum of forty pounds sterling;

The residue of all my clear goods and debts, mine own debts paid, I will shall be divided in three equal parts, that is to say, one part to my wife, one to my son, and the third part to be equally divided to my three daughters at the days of their marriages;

And the profits of all the residue of my lands not appointed to my wife, I will shall be gathered and received to the behalfts and profits of my foresaid son and three daughters during the nonage of my said son, then he, my said son, to take the whole profits of one third part, and thother third part to go to the marriages of my three daughters at the days of their marriages as is before written till their said parts shall come to two hundred marks apiece, provided always that if any of them do fortune to die, their parts to remain to them that shall live;

And where Dorothy Leighton is a right honest maiden and a gentlewoman whom I do use to call daughter, not knowing what friends she hath, I will that she shall have at the day of her marriage one hundred marks out of such debts and revenues appointed to my said son and daughters as are before rehearsed;

Item, I will and bequeath to every of my servants one whole year's wages beforehand;

Item, I will to be given to the poor and most needy the sum of five pounds sterling;

And all other things I will to be ordained at the discretion of mine executors, whom I ordain to be my wife and my cousin, Henry Wingfield, esquire, my body to be buried in Saint Nicholas churchyard besides my uncle, Sir Robert Wingfield, and to be catholically without pomp brought to the earth;

Item, I desire my Lord Deputy to be good Lord to my servants William Worseley, Richard Bryane, John Bennett and William Phillips that have served me long, over and besides to all other my servants that hath not served me so long;

In witness of the premises I have desired Mr Henry Dudley, Mr John Cooke, Mr Henry Hurleston, Captain Bassett, Oswolde Wylkynson and Guysnes to set hereunto their hands and seals forasmuch as I myself, being in the sweat, dare not set mine own hand. Written at Guisnes the 20th day of July Anno domini millesimo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum coram Magistro Waltero Haddon legum Doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Commissario apud London vicesimo quinto die mensis Nouembris Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo sexagesimo Iuramento Thome Welles procuratoris Vrsule Hall executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominate Cui commissa fuit administratio &c De bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario Necnon de vero et plano compoto reddendo &c Iurate

[=The above-written testament was proved before Master Walter Haddon, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the twenty-fifth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixtieth by the oath of Thomas Welles, proctor of Ursula Hall, executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and to render a full and faithful inventory and also a true and plain account etc.]